The INYO COUNTY NEWS-LETTER

A NEWS ALTERNATIVE - EASTERN SIERRA NEWS SERVICE

Compiled by John Heston and Benett Kessler

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MAIL EARLY FOR CHRISTMAS

Week of
Dec. 5, 1977

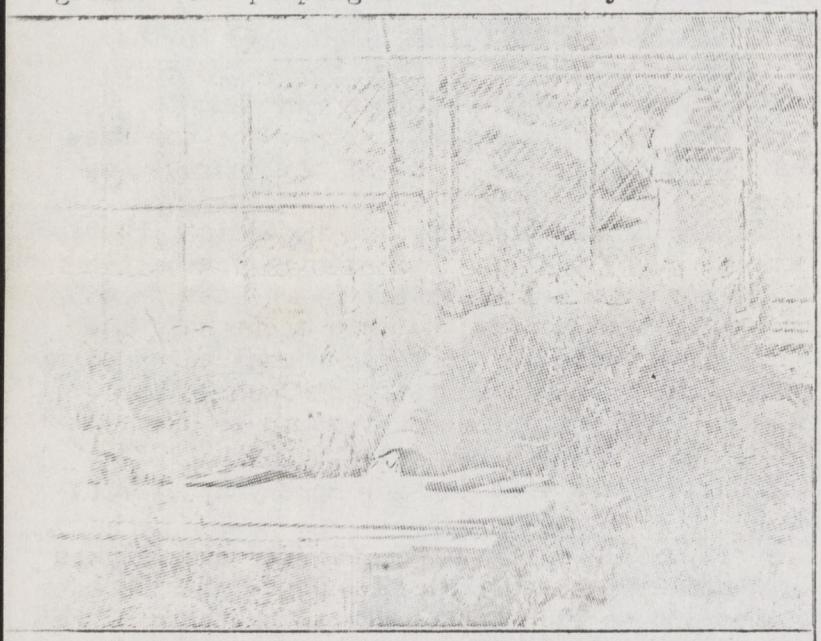
STONEWALLING IT AT DWP

PUMPING THE DWP FOR GROUNDWATER FACTS, THE COUNTY HYDROLOGIST FINDS A DRY WELL

County Hydrologist Phil Williams calls "incredible" his experiences in trying to get water and pumping figures from the files of L.A.'s Department of Water and Power.

Williams was hired some months ago by the county administration which had long doubted the DWP's statistics - statistics which more often than not were contradictory, or, for the county at least, non-existent.

There is a question even now as to whether the department is living up to the demands and restrictions of a court order which limits groundwater pumping in Owens Valley. Williams



GROUNDWATER PUMP IN THE OWENS VALLEY
"They are there. They are pumping." How much?

was hired to work with the county's lawyers in "keeping DWP honest."

But even as he was hired, more questions arose concerning his - or anybody else's - ability to get factual information without the co-operation of the department. So far, "cooperation" is about the last intention of DWP in dealing with Inyo County - a fact to which a few L.A. city officials candidly admit.

From his office at San Francisco, Williams told a reporter last week that he is now at work on evaluating changes that have occur- in the valley's groundwater level since DWP began its pumping program. But even in that effort he must at times rely on figures furnished, more or less, by the department. At best, says Williams, he can get "basic, raw data such as individual well-depth readings, with no analysis or interpretations." As a result of DWP reluctance, he spends "many hours in calculations that DWP has and won't hand over.

"They never send me quite what I ask for.

(See HYDROLOGIST, Page 7)

Talking Back

COUNTY OFFICIALS AGREE - AND DISAGREE - WITH GRAND JURY'S LIST OF DEPARTMENT CRITICISMS

Some county officials, more than a little put out by recent criticism from the grand jury, have filed (as prescribed by law) their answers to the grand jury's findings. Predictably, the board of supervisors and the officials involved agree with the jurors in their report on "tactics of the DWP," and just as predictably disagree where the jury scored hits on the workings of county government.

Here follows a summarized report on what the jury said - and what the various departments say in their formal "answer" to the jury, released on Friday:

ENVIRONMENT AND DWP:

The jury urged an update of the county's "General Plan" that would include a water management plan and protections of the valley's groundwater resources. County officials quickly agree with that and with the further suggestion that Inyo County should push for representation on the DWP Board of Commissioners. They also agree that they should remain on "guard against the divisive tactics used by the City of Los Angeles to lower the county's resistance to DWP's subterfuge."

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

The jury claims, in effect, that the director of public works, Robert Fisher, is doing somewhat less than the jury expects of him, that too much work and/or authority is now del-

(See TALKING BACK, Page 3)

THE COURTS

THE ECONOMY MOTORS FIRE SPARKS STILL ANOTHER SUIT CLAIMING FIRE WAS "SET"

More heat appears to be rising out of the long-dead embers of the Economy Motors fire of last February. On top of lawsuits already filed by an insurance company, and an exhaustive investigation by the fire marshall, another suit was filed last week by lawyers representing an elderly couple living adjacent the building where the explosion and fire occurred.

Howard and Musie Edgar of Bishop claim in a superior court action that the defendants, Quint Sondergard and Victor Perry "carelessly operated their business so as to create foreseeable risks of injury to persons on adjacent properties."

The Edgars say that as a result of the Economy Motors fire there was "injury" and "damage" to the plaintiffs' "health, strength and activity." And they also cite their "loss of furniture, clothing, leashold interest, personal effects," and the "lost use of the house and a car for a period of two days."

Their suit describes how the Economy Motors explosion covered them with shattered glass. They were sleeping when it erupted in the fire that destroyed the plant. And like another plaintiff before them, the Edgars charge that the defendants "intentionally caused" the explosion and fire.

(See THE COURTS, Page 3)

»»»» NOTES FROM B.K. «««

BENETT KESSLER

FROM SOMEBODY ELSE'S XEROX we got this poignant joke: It seems that a distinguished scientist was discussing among friends the future of the national water supply.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have good news and bad news. Our study shows that by the year 2000 everybody will be drinking recycled sewerage from his water tap." To that, one of his audience replied: "Great Scott ! Quick, tell us the good news."

"That," said the scientist, "was the good news. The bad news is that there won't be enough to go around."

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FRANCE, ENGLAND, SWITZERLAND, GERMANY - Europe, in short - is "Out." They've all been "done," and so where now for the amusement-seeking Travel Crowd? The Orient and the Far East are "in" again, or so in effect says Nancy Varnum, the gad-about operator of Bishop's High Sierra Travel Service. Varnum and husband Dale are fresh off the plane that took them "one-and-a-half times around the world." A recent thirty days' traveling covered: India, Japan, China and Thailand, to name a few. She says the sights are "unreal": the unimaginable splendor of Taj Mahal standing in contrast to the squalor and poverty of Bombay. A trip through the marketplaces will net the shopper a "paradise of bargains," or even the offer of a starving child offered up by its pitiful mother. (No takers so far, at least not from the 150-200 Inyo and Mono trippers who made the junket last year.)

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STILL THE BEST PLACE TO SEE IN INDIA, aside from Varnum's recommended tour: Kashmir, where, if you keep your guard up and automatic weapons handy, you can still get a houseboat (first class) and good service, and float in serene privacy around Kashmir's watery gardens and forests in "the perfect climate."

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SPEAKING OF TRAVEL, Mexico is urgently announcing that the Bandidos have been reduced and that travelers to Morelos and points southwest may, after all, get out of the place alive. Everybody should drive Durango Pass ONCE; it's a test of stamina. Do it at night and you won't see just how much trouble you might be in. Do NOT run out of gas - or ammo.

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FOR THE MORE THOUGHTFUL who don't buy NBC's and ABC'S showmanship-news schlock, there were a few moving moments over on CBS this past week: Eric Sevareid retired and on his final broadcast took a deep and predictably insightful look at American TV viewers and the medium that is supposed to keep them informed.

On journalism: "...not to underestimate the intelligence of the audience, not to overestimate its information; to elucidate when one can, more than to advocate...to retain the courage of one's doubts as well as one's convictions in this world of dangerously passionate certainties..."

Sustaining him through it all, said Sevareid, was the listening public which applies one test: "Not agreement with one on substance, but the perception of honesty and fairness. There is in the American people a tough, undiminished instinct for what is fair. Rightly or wrongly, I have the feeling that I have passed this test. I shall wear this like a medal." And well he should. His penetrating insights, his remarkable ability to put into articulate form what many felt but could not express, have been with us for years and literate and intelligent people will miss him.

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IT WAS SEVAREID who once commented while covering a political convention: "A few well-chosen words are worth a thousand pictures."

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VERY PLEASANT PEOPLE DEPT.: Gregg James, a recent addition to the DA's staff. Well-read and well-traveled, he has a sense of humor. Some of the county's belles see him as one of the area's "most eligible."

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OTHER VPP's: "Cy" Ossofsky and family, and a neighbor of their's, Dick Beach and his Ms. The Beaches are in-to old woodstoves, and they have turned their house (Shepherd Lane) into a showplace and museum.

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PROMPTED BY A LETTER FROM HENRY RAUB to the "FORUM" page last week, some calls are going out to Washington from people who want to get back the "Inyo Meteorite," either for the museum here, or for the foyer of the courthouse. Raub was treated kind of high-handedly when he asked the Smithsonian for the meteorite. It has come to light that the Smithsonian "automatically" has free access to ALL meteorites found in the United States, and owns about half the meteorites found in the world - most of which gather dust in Smithsonian storerooms. Somebody is contacting the congressman to see what he can do - and somebody else with a line to the White House - is pushing Rosalynn herself.

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THE "INYO METEORITE" WAS FOUND NEAR BIG PINE in 1922 and sent to Smithsonian. It weighs 300 pounds and we'll bet that nobody except a few museum custodians has laid eyes on it in years.

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I'D LIKE TO SEE IF INYO COUNTY has enough clout to get it back, if anybody's interested.

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A LOT OF NEWSMEN HAVEN'T YET DISCOVERED they can get practically any information they want from practically ANY public agency, and under the new Freedom of Information Act they no longer have to settle for hand-outs from officials who tend to cover-up either for themselves or friends. Take note.

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EASY CHRISTMAS SHOPPING: Something for practically everybody at the county's antique houses. This is the day of good but used "funky" items, and the shops are loaded. But know how to buy.

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AND EXCEPT FOR THE NEWS that the county's special Counsel for DWP matters, Tony Rossman, is traveling in Katmandu (says a friend), I'll travel off with the hope that the news in your day will be good news, every day.

Sincerely,

BK

LIVESTOCK GRAZES BARREN DESERT PASTURELAND BORDERING HIGHWAY 395

UNDERFED STOCK

FROM PASSING MOTORISTS, ANGRY COMPLAINTS ABOUT LAME AND STARVING HORSES

After several calls from motorists who saw emaciated horses limping over desert pastureland near the highway, state humane officers from Los Angeles initiated a crackdown; it already was planned by health officials here.

Following a pre-Thanksgiving investigation, the humane officers filed a report with the district attorney, an action not considered a "complaint." They named in their report Larry Wolf, owner of the once-prosperous Sequoia Kings Pack Station. Wolf's sizeable collection of livestock (and a number of Old-West wagons) often were seen in better days in a number of parades held hereabouts. Some of the wagons have been used in the filming of western movies.

But lately, mounting problems have beset Wolf and Sequoia Kings; first, there was a truck accident, then problems with one or more employees, and a brush with the law. And now, in addition to those, the United States Forest Service has seen fit to revoke Wolf's permit to use Inyo National Forest land. Inyo Forest Information Officer Tom Sayre was reluctant to make public USFS reasons for canceling the Wolf permit, but added that Wolf has appealed the revocation.

When the citizen-complaints started, the Inyo Health Department began its own investigation and, according to a health department source, was "planning to file a complaint." But their own information was turned over to the state men when they moved in.

Whether the matter will actually go to court is another matter. Deputy District Attorney Phil McDowell said that his office "has received reports from the state humane officers on Wolf," but he added that the district attorney is "waiting for additional reports...specifically, reports from the veterinarians, before determining if a complaint will be issued."

If a formal complaint is filed, Wolf will face, at most, a misdemeanor charge.

The issue began with a motorist who saw Wolf's starving stock while driving to

(See HUMANE OFFICERS, Back Page)

TALKING BACK, Continued

egated to his assistant, Roger Glidden. Officials defend Fisher by saying that the department is a large one and that its work must be delegated; that for "long over-due maintenance tasks" a "painter" position has been established.

LAW ENFORCEMENT:

The jury suggests that television, a new cooling system, and exercise equipment should be provided for the county's jail inmates. Great, replies Sheriff Floyd Barton in effect, but too expensive. Barton answered the jury in a letter to the supervisors. But one item in the sheriff's office list of problems may now be solved: the long-standing need (and often discussed) emergency generator. Barton says he now expects the generator to be installed in coming months, to fill the need for an alternate power source. (See box story following.)

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE:

The supervisors have already complied with a grand jury demand that Veterans Officer Jim Kelley be fired, but the board defends itself on the length of time it took to swing the axe by replying: "Information and interviews that were available to the grand jury were not available to the board's committee." (Kelley resigned Dec 1, after a long drawn-out investigation and public uproar that started in April.)

SHERIFF'S OFFICE GENERATOR: BLACK-TOP TO AVOID BLACK-OUT

For five years or more, concerned deputies who more than once have experienced a power failure, have sought an emergency generator to provide light and radio power when conditions demand. Somehow, red tape and questions of authority have combined to halt each effort. Meanwhile, during power outages, the radio operators have broadcast their signals from a prowl car parked outside the sheriff's office. They have seen the situation in the light of good humor, but all are awed by the potential of real trouble.

Their hopes may soon be realized: It seems that Southern Inyo Hospital, short of money and in need of resurfacing for a parking area, has a suitable generator on hand; The county, on the other hand, in need of a generator, has the men and equipment for the resurfacing job. It's all under discussion.

THE COURTS, Continued

For their troubles, the Edgars want general damages in the amount of $50,000; for replacement of property, $110,000; and as punitive damages, $250,000; and what they call "treble damages" for "intentional trespass."

An earlier suit was filed by Royal Globe Insurance Company which had refused to pay a claim filed with them by the defendants. Sondergard and Perry said in a statement several weeks ago that they are hiring the prominent San Francisco trial lawyer, Melvin Belli, to deal with their legal entanglements.

POLICE-UNIFORMED EXPLORER SCOUTS LUNCH WITH OFFICERS AT A SMALL PARK WHILE ON A TOUR

News Briefs

MUTH APPOINTMENT

Inyo Supervisor Wilma Muth still awaits word on her proposed appointment to the State Water Quality Control Board which now has two vacancies and soon will have a third. An aide in the governor's office told Eastern Sierra News Service only that "We hope to make the appointments soon." Dr. Carlotta Melon, the governor's appointments secretary, declined to comment on Muth's chances for appointment.

SCHOOL LOANS

Until tax dollars flow in after the new year, Inyo schools are borrowing needed cash from the county's general fund. Owens Valley School asked for and got $40,000, far less than was needed in similar circumstances last year ($100,000). Bishop Union High School has asked the supervisors for a $50,000 temporary cash advance, as compared with last year's $100,000. School officials express belief that better management of school funds has reduced their need for cash advances while awaiting tax money.

INYO CHRISTMAS MAIL

OFTEN-UNHEEDED WARNING: "MAIL EARLY"

Postal Service officials this week announced deadlines (some already past) for holiday mailings here and abroad. The key dates, apparently, are Dec. 10 and Dec. 19, the former for packages, the latter for letters and cards. The dates apply for mailings within the United States, if, as postal officials warn, the mailer wants to be assured of pre-Christmas delivery.

Local postoffice workers say that a "military mail" deadline has already gone by, as have some deadlines for mailings to foreign addresses; too late, for instance, for Australia. But there is still time for Christmas mail to reach European points, and also for mailings to the Far East, with deadlines fixed at Dec. 12.

Remote United States addresses - Hawaii and Alaska - will get mail before Christmas if the mailer posts his parcels by Dec. 14; the same for West Indies points.

Some Europe-bound mail was held up in a recent dock strike on the East Coast, but air mail was undelayed.

UNUSUAL ALLIANCE

"NATURAL" ANTAGONISTS- COPS AND KIDS- COME TOGETHER IN A BISHOP PD PROGRAM

An active Explorer Scout program in Bishop, now about a year old, has linked in more or less mutual understanding two factions usually found at odds with each other: teenagers and police. Although the idea is not new (a number of large cities have sponsored such programs for years), there were some questions at first about how it would work, if at all. But Bishop's youthful, and youth-oriented, police chief of that time, Jerry Galvin, took the experimental leap, and, carried on by his successors, the program not only stayed alive but appears to be growing.

At least a dozen Bishop youths, in an almost even mixture of young men and women, have entered the Explorer project. Some "got in-to it" out of curiosity and with quite a lot of concern about what their peers on the streets might think. Their reservations were quickly overcome by the realization that the Bishop Police Department at least offered a positive program of activity to take up the hours in a town offering little for young people looking for something to occupy leisure hours. Their continued interest is shown in the fact that the Explorer program has little "turn-over."

The police early-on ordered up uniforms strikingly similar to the ones they themselves wear - neckties and all - and most of the membership wear them with a neat, orderly pride.

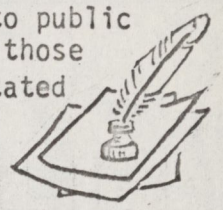
It is a participating program as compared with one of merely looking-on; in spare time the Explorer members operate the police radio, and work on files and crime surveys at the police station. In the recent Christmas parade, they effectively - and with no hesitancy to assert their appointed authority - directed traffic in the parade area.

Last week, accompanied by two officers who work with the program, and riding in two BPD prowl cars, they were taken on tour of the jail at Independence, the courthouse and law library.

One of the officers, Asst. Advisor Boe Turner, said four or five of his Explorers are looking with interest toward a career in law enforcement. The program is open to young men and women in the 15-21 age group.

FORUM
LETTERS AND COMMENT

The NEWS-LETTER welcomes letters and comment relevant to public issues, and the editors will publish on the FORUM page those they consider timely. Letters should not exceed 200 words. Viewpoints concisely stated are those most likely to be published. Address your statement to NEWS-LETTER, PO Box 531, Independence 93526, or call (714) 878-2582, or (714) 878-2381.



MORE ON CONGRESSMAN KETCHUM'S JUNKET TO THE MIDDLE EAST

A news story tells of Bakersfield Congressman William Ketchum throwing a monkey wrench into the congressional workings for Social Security reform - because he decided to take off - with his wife - on a taxpayer-paid junket to Africa and the Middle East with a committee of which he is not even a member.

Any compromise on Social Security will have to await his return.

Could this be our Bill Ketchum we used to know in the 1960s when, as San Luis Obispo Farm Bureau president, he fervently railed against traveling politicians and government waste?

Is this our Assemblyman Bill Ketchum who wore the mantle of a farmer-citizen-lawmaker, and condemned so eloquently legislative skullduggery?

Is this Candidate Ketchum who so convincingly promised - if elected to Congress - to work for "a solvent Social Security"?

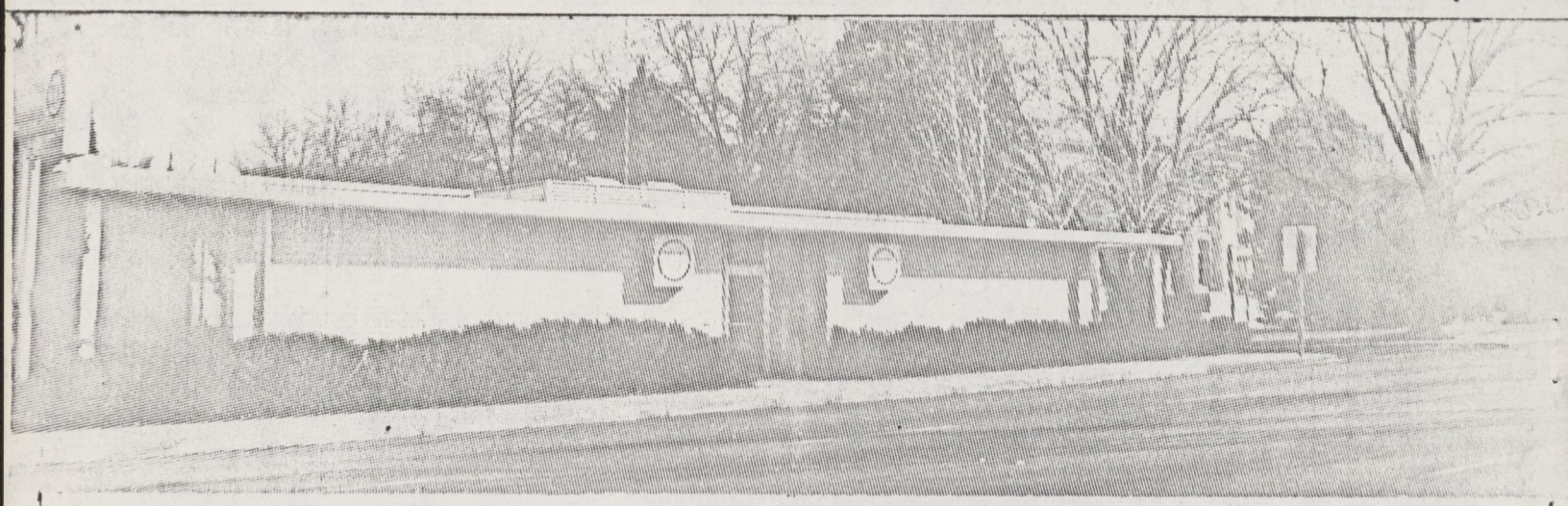
And is this Crusader Ketchum, so vehement against all delays, especially when caused by public interest groups through due process?

One might muse how far Congressman Ketchum has come.

From the dry hills of Paso Robles, where he ranched for several years, but long enough to win election to the Assembly as a grassroots farmer; to Bakersfield, where being an

(See FORUM, Page 8)

"DWP ANNOUNCES OCTOBER LOT SALES"-(Play it again, Duane.)



THE TITLE INSURANCE AND TRUST BUILDING: Maybe for it, "an offer they can't refuse."

BUREAUCRACY'S SPACE WOES

BURGEONING COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND A PROLIFERATION OF PAPERWORK: CRITICAL CROWDING

And if their present troubles - insurance, welfare, the General Plan, translator TV, and the DWP - are not already enough for those who take care of the county's business, then there's a new one: the lack of space to solve some of the other problems in.

Of growing concern to the county's caretakers, and the long-suffering employees they direct, is the increasing problem of storage and work room.

Although the people served by county government have remained more or less constant in number, the number of people serving them has increased dramatically in recent decades. County government, like government everywhere at all levels, has proliferated into a complex interworking bureaucracy. Nowadays, its people devote much of their time to mountains of paperwork foisted on them by federal and state bureaus. If by chance the state sends down a directive - and then another contradicting it - then the county must file both and wait for a third to clarify them. The county files are fat with such nonsense.

And very often county workers themselves must do the work for the state or federal agencies. As one demoralized county employee succinctly defines it: "We fill out forms and fill in little squares on paper. We make copies of everything - and don't have time for much else." And, more and more, the county is hiring more people to fill in the squares and file them all away. The form-fillers are working elbow-to-elbow.

And of no help at all, for now at least, is the sleek, modern and roomy "TI Building" sitting vacant and unused a few yards away. It is in the clear view of the harried county people who in some cases are beginning to get on each others' nerves.

In hopes of buying more room - and the time to catch up - the county administration has long wanted to move some of its departments across the street. Seen in terms of convenient nearness, it is a coveted plum for which the county has offered $75,000 to Title Insurance and Trust Company. According to a company spokesman at Bishop the offer "was referred to the L.A. office."

There, apparently, it rests, either ignored or forgotten. "TI" spokesmen say they "have some offers, though nothing definite." They urgently say, however, that they "want to sell it," but they make no comment on the Inyo County offer. Small potatoes in a seller's market.

Whether the county will increase its offer is a matter that probably will be decided either by the ability to pay or the degree of desperation for space.

County Administrator John K. Smith avers that many county departments are in "really bad shape." Of the county planning department (which even now wants to expand its workforce), Smith said, "It's a jungle. They are wallbound."

Smith said there are "no end of uses for the 'TI' Building," and that even if it were already in county hands, "it could take six months or longer to study and make the best use of it."

At the top of the county's space-priority list are the planning department, welfare and probation departments, and the hard-pressed central service department. "CS" was long ago shoved into a basement originally designed as a civil defense shelter. It suffers for lack of windows and storage space.

A few county officials say they believe that in the long run it may be best to meet "TI's" price, whatever it is. To support their idea, they point out what it could cost to build a new structure. To any but the weariest of bureau-burdened taxpayers (who resist further expansion of government in any case), the "TI Building" proponents make sense.

Considering the need, and the un-nerving thought of what it might cost later, the administration may after all have to make to "TI" an offer it can't refuse.

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INYO COUNTY NEWS-LETTER

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Lace Curtains in the Outhouse

by GLORIA LEWIS

AN UPDATE REPORT ON LONE PINE'S FRIENDLY, GUN-TOTIN' WOMAN MINER, JENNIFER ROY

It is a plain little wooden outhouse. Plain with a few exceptions: It has a window surrounded by a delicate halo of white fabric. Pictures - the scenes of bygone days - adorn its walls. On the floor, a fluffy rug. In one corner stands a basket of flowers and from their midst glitters a gold bird.

In many ways the outhouse reflects the character of its owner, a mixture of tough and soft, an anomaly of the times.

The owner, too, is all rustic and lace: She visits a beauty parlor once a week but she also hauls silver ore out of a mine and carries a 12 gauge shotgun.

She is Lone Pine's own Jennifer Roy, the attractive blonde socialite who would have been a challenging contender for a Miss America title. Instead, she sought a different life, one of peace and seclusion...but not TOO secluded.

She bought the mine in the mountains east of Lone Pine and set about to clear it and build on it. The task appeared then nearly unmanageable, but, fortunately, she felt no need to "prove" anything about what a woman alone could accomplish, and when help came in the form of a hefty Indian from Lone Pine, she gladly accepted. The considerable strength of Carl Sylvis, coupled with her determination, overcame most of the handicaps.

Once, when several "claim jumpers" encroached on her land - and her privacy - they were welcomed warmly by Jennifer and Carl armed with 12-gaugers.

A couple of years ago, as you may have read practically anywhere, Jennifer and a burro friend took off for a hike from Lone Pine to Houston - this in spite of a need for surgery in one of her legs. (In case it got bad, she had brought along a burro cart, but she never found the need to ride, even after three days of pain and swelling. The long hike became a healing process and today she is well - without surgery.)

On her trek as the "Bicentennial Lady" she became famous. Veterans especially seemed to take to her and those from the VA hospitals are now welcome to use her Claim as a retreat.

She is religious, in a deep and interesting way. She says now that she could never have completed such a trip without a number of supportive "spiritual experiences," like once when she felt protected against the possible attack of a mountain lion. And in several encounters with "two-legged varmints" she was victorious without resorting to her gun.

In a note accompanying her story about Jennifer Roy, Writer Lewis stated that "Doing an interview on Jennifer Roy is like trying to hold a wave upon the sand. She is in and out of town as much or more than I." Currently, Gloria Lewis is "in town" at Lone Pine, turning out a book. In her small camper she travels the West, seeking out "old-timers," ghost towns, and "just folks."

She has an inclination, altruistically directed, toward helping others, a trait that has caused her fame to spread; people from foreign countries have come to see this person they have heard of - and not always out of a mere curiosity. They find something in her that surpasses the fact that she is a "colorful character." The veterans she knows still frequent the place in the mountains. Carl Sylvis continues to help.

The continuing loyalty of the friends she has made reveals another facet of her character - the ability, rare nowadays - to both make, and keep, friends, all-the-while adding new ones.

Like her outhouse at the mine, she is a curious blend of attractive contrasts: lace and cactus, a kind of sweet rusticity. Curtains on a weathered outhouse.

She dared to turn her dreams into reality. It may be that on people like her, the country depends for its survival, and its creative existence.

HYDROLOGIST, Continued

Something will be missing, or it's the wrong material altogether. They'll eventually send me what I want after I hassle them enough.

"It's been incredible."

The department, according to the hydrologist, explains its niggardly assistance by assuming conveniently that the city and the county are "in litigation" and therefore only the barest of materials can be handed over. Actually, as a public agency, its files are - or should be - open to any who seek them. The county may eventually have to demonstrate that fact to DWP officials - by going to court again.

The state supreme court granted DWP the right to pump valley groundwater, but restricted the pumping to "confined aquifers" - areas of groundwater "closed off" from the valley's main "basin." Whether these even exist or not provides a question for the county, the court, and perhaps even the DWP. Williams said "it is possible" that some of the areas - perhaps all - that are being pumped, are unconfined. If that is so, then DWP is in violation of the court order - and the valley's groundwater level, already seriously depleted, is in for more loss. In its ruling, the court allowed an increase over former restrictions to DWP's pumping activities - but only for a period which ends in March. Whether DWP has held itself to the amounts stated, no one seems able to prove convincingly. It is unlikely that the court itself could find out since its expertise lies in areas of law rather than hydrology.

The pumps are There; they are pumping. Only those who man them can see for sure what their rate of flow is - and then, only in individual pumps since the rest are scattered over miles of remote valley desert. It is unlikely that even DWP crews working in their own specified districts could provide more than the figures for the pumps in their care.

Williams warns that Inyo County must have "an understanding of what is happening in this temporary pumping. There is every indication for them to say they want to continue it when the order expires in March."

DEC 5 1978

HUMANE OFFICERS, Continued

Tahoe. There, he called a humane office which in turn contacted San Diego and Los Angeles officials. They were quick to act, and, along with Wolf, a sheriff's deputy and two veterinarians, they went to the desert rangeland near Black Rock for a first-hand look. What they found was a sorry lot of sick and lame animals, "about 52 mules, donkeys and horses, all undernourished."

One of these - too sick to survive a trip to Los Angeles - was ordered shot on the spot. Six more were shipped to L.A. to be slaughtered.

The desertland on which the animals had been placed is considered by botanists to be barren of any vegetation that would provide any nutrition for animals.

The Wolf situation brought into focus a problem the county administration has faced, or failed to face, for some time: that of the county's lack of a humane society as such. Officials have wanted to designate animal control officers as humane officers, but they ran aground on certain fine points of the law difficult to define. And what they call a "full-fledged" humane society is far too costly. But since the health department knows now that the state organization can be called on, moves in that direction may probably be abandoned. Officers point out that an increasing number of smaller neglect cases may sooner or later demand some kind of local authority.

Attempts were made over the weekend to reach Wolf for comment, but he could not be immediately located.

FORUM, Continued

ally of big agriculture and big oil sold better at the polls; to the Potomac, where the welfare of all wage earners can be subverted for the pleasures of the Ivory Coast and Kenya.

Leapfrogging in politics isn't all that hard - if one doesn't worry about consistency and commitment.

- Harold Miossi, San Luis Obispo

(EDITOR'S NOTE. A similar letter from FORUM contributor Miossi appeared in an issue of the Los Angeles TIMES. The news story upon which his letter is based concerned the delay of a House-Senate conference on proposed reform of Social Security. Ketchum said in a news release that the delay was an effort to assure the inclusion of his own amendment calling for abolishment of an earnings limit on S.S. pensioners, and, in Congressman Ketchum's words, "to stop the irresponsible trend of ramrodding through congress measures which have far-reaching impact on all our citizens." He may, however, have failed in his effort: shortly after a speech at mid-week (11/23), the House decided to reject an effort to instruct conferees to keep his amendment.)

March of Dimes

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